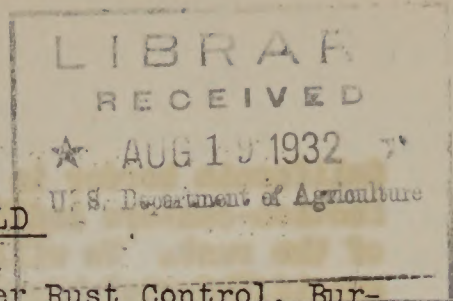


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THE PRESENT OUTLOOK
IN THE WHITE PINE BLISTER RUST FIELD

A radio talk by George A. Root, Division of Blister Rust Control, Bureau of Plant Industry, United States Department of Agriculture, delivered during the Western Farm and Home Hour Thursday, August 4, 1932, through Station KGO and nine other stations associated with the NBC-KGO network, Pacific Division, National Broadcasting Company.

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Economic depressions play no part in preventing the natural spread of insect pests or plant diseases. These continue to take their toll in spite of the financial status of man. Furthermore they acknowledge no state or national boundaries. To be sure the extent of man's fight against these pests, is closely related to the amount of funds available. In some cases, lack of funds to combat pests and diseases may let them spread further and faster than they would if man made a harder fight against them.

The campaign against the white pine blister rust in the West has been going on with little interruption for several years. As you may recall this disease attacks all white pines, including those of greatest commercial value in the West, the western white pine and sugar pine. We obtain control of the rust by removing the alternate hosts of the disease, currant and gooseberry bushes, within and near stands of pine. The largest rust control operations are being carried on in northern Idaho where the rust is rapidly invading and destroying valuable western white pine stands on unprotected areas; the next largest operation is in California where the spread of the rust from the north threatens the well known sugar pine.

Though funds have been curtailed to some extent, the 1932 field season opened in three states, Washington, Idaho and California. In these states approximately 1,000 men will be employed throughout the summer. In northern Idaho we are continuing work on the Clearwater and St. Joe National Forests, as well as on private holdings represented by two Timber Protective Associations, and on lands owned by the State of Idaho. In Washington control work is again under way on Mount Rainier National Park. The public appreciates more and more the aesthetic value of trees.

In California we are working no new areas but are undertaking a re-eradication of Ribes on an area on the Stanislaus National Forest, originally covered in 1928. It is generally conceded that more than one working will be necessary to give satisfactory protection to this area.

During 1931 our scouts found 45 new pine-infection centers in northern Idaho, two in Washington and one in Oregon. None of these new infection centers marked any spread of blister rust to new regions but the fact that we found 45 new centers in one year shows that the disease intensifies rapidly when once established. As far as we know the rust is still within fifty miles of the

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California border in southwestern Oregon. Reports from the field near infection-centers indicate that this has been an excellent season for the spread of the rust. We will carry on scouting in northern California this season to see if the rust has made its entry into this state. California is the last important white pine state in which the rust has not been found.

To some who may be skeptical as to the menace of the blister rust, let me quote from an article recently written by a well known forester of the Northwest. He says: (quote) "I have just returned from a trip with several other foresters and blister rust men through the country around Nelson and Revelstoke, British Columbia, which has been infected with blister rust for some years. The first infection is believed to have occurred in 1919. If anyone has any doubt about the blister rust being a serious threat to white pine he should take this trip. The most skeptical would be convinced."

The forester further states: "It would appear that our job on the national forests in Idaho and western Montana is to push control work sufficiently rapidly to keep ahead of the progress of the disease, concentrating particularly on the more valuable young stands." (end of quotation)

The oncoming young stands of white and sugar pine today will be our forests of tomorrow. Let's protect them.